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RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT 2209  
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 7062  
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT 6258  
RUEHNM/AMEMBASSY NIAMEY 1499  
RUEHBP/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 0446  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0451  
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 3292  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KDEM](#) [AG](#)  
SUBJECT: BOUTEFLLIKA: LIBYA LOOKING TOWARDS U.S.

Classified By: Ambassador Robert S. Ford; reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (S) In a February 26 meeting with NEA Assistant Secretary C. David Welch, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika

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stated emphatically that while Libyan Leader Muammar al-Qadhafi needs to protect his image with a sometimes defiant public discourse, his mindset is now firmly pro-U.S. Furthermore, according to Bouteflika, the members of Qadhafi's inner circle are all pro-American, open-minded, and in many cases U.S.-educated. Although the current unresolved claims against Libya by families of terror victims have prevented the U.S.-Libyan relationship from progressing more rapidly, Bouteflika told A/S Welch to "count on Libya wanting good relations with the U.S."

12. (S) A/S Welch said Bouteflika could tell Qadhafi that the U.S. intends to work through these problems and does not want to go back to the past. Bouteflika responded without hesitation that Qadhafi wants the same thing, and nobody in the region wants to go back to the way things were. Qadhafi's only concern now, according to Bouteflika, is terrorism. He said Algeria enjoys good counterterrorism cooperation with Libya and was optimistic it would get even better.

13. (U) This cable has not been cleared by A/S Welch.